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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 034888

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INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /021 R

DRAFTED BY COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/WHAIMES/CF
APPROVED BY EB/OCA/REP/BEBYRON
COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/CATKINS
COM/BIC/OED/MEPD/JMSANDS, DIR.
COM/BIC/OIM/(INFO)
STATE/AF/W/HWALKER (PHONE)
EB/OCA/BR/IWILLIAMSON
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P 142211Z FEB 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 034888

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: BEXP, NI
SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: NIGERIAN EXPORT REFINERIES

REF: STATE 17483

1. OUR CONTACT AT GULF OIL, WHO PROVIDED US WITH CURRENT COMPANY THINKING ON REFINERY SITUATION, CALLED YESTERDAY TO INFORM US THAT SOMEONE IN LAGOS HAD PASSED REPORT CONTAINED IN CONFIDENTIAL REFTEL TO GULF'S NIGERIAN OFFICE. AS REFTEL INDICATES, COMPANY HAS NOT YET REACHED CORPORATE DECISION WHETHER TO PURSUE REFINERY PROJECT. CONSEQUENTLY, PASSAGE OF INFORMATION TO LOCAL OFFICE HAS CAUSED INTERNAL PROBLEMS AT GULF AND SERIOUSLY EMBARASSED OUR SOURCE WHO, UNFORTUNATELY, MAY NO LONGER BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON COMPANY'S INTENTIONS IN NIGERIA OR OTHER COUNTRIES.

2. DURING OUR EARLIER CONVERSATION, OUR SOURCE DID NOT INFORM US THAT GULF NIGERIA WAS UNAWARE OF CORPORATE PLANS, AND THEREFORE WE DID NOT INFORM EMBASSY OF POSSIBLE PROBLEMS IN SPEAKING WITH LOCAL OFFICE.
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PAGE 02 STATE 034888

HOWEVER, IN OUR EXPERIENCE IT IS OFTEN CASE THAT LOCAL

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006

OFFICES NOT ADVISED OF CORPORATE ACTIVITY UNTIL DECISIONS ARE MADE, AND THEREFORE EMBASSY CAN UNDERSTAND REASON TO BE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL IN FUTURE IN SPEAKING WITH GULF OR OTHER COMPANIES RE INFO FROM WASHINGTON.

3. RE PARA 4 REFTEL, COMPANY NOW NOT REPEAT NOT PLANNING TO SEND ANYONE TO EXPLORE LUBE OIL FACILITY OR ANY OTHER OPPORTUNITIES AT THIS TIME.

4. IN VIEW OF PROBLEMS THIS HAS CAUSED, GULF REQUESTS EMBASSY REFRAIN FROM FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH GULF NIGERIAN OFFICES, OR ANYONE ELSE, ON GULF INTEREST IN REFINERY OR LUBE OIL FACILITY FOR TIME BEING. WE ALSO SUGGEST THAT PROBLEMS MENTIONED ABOVE NOT REPEAT NOT BE DISCUSSED WITH GULF.

5. WE ARE STILL PLANNING PURSUE EXPORT REFINERIES WITH GULF AND OTHERS, NOTWITHSTANDING THIS SETBACK. REQUEST EMBASSY ANSWER QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL ASAP. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE IF EMBASSY CAN COME UP WITH OTHER LEADS AS TO POSSIBLE OPERATING PARTNERS.
INGERSOLL

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EO Systematic Review
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